

IN RECOGNITION OF BENEVOLENCE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH'S 162ND ANNIVERSARY

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 13, 2015*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my sincere congratulations to the congregation of Benevolence Missionary Baptist Church in Randolph County, Georgia as the church's membership and leadership celebrates a remarkable 162 years. The congregation of Benevolence Missionary Baptist Church celebrated this very significant anniversary on Sunday, April 12, 2015 at the church near Cuthbert, Georgia.

Tracing its roots back to the pre-Civil War era, the church was founded in 1853 when a group of former slaves set off from their landowners' church and boldly founded their own place of worship. This establishment would stand the test of time, becoming Benevolence Missionary Baptist Church.

The Reverend Green McCarthy served as the first pastor of the new congregation, Jake Knighton served as the first deacon, and Dan Knighton served as the first usher. Since none of the members could read or write, Brother T.J. Coram served as records keeper until an African-American member, Brother Phelm Knighton, could become clerk.

From the beginning, members paid what they could. Ideally, this was ten cents—raised to twenty-five cents in 1890—but when chickens, eggs, or vegetables were all people could come by, these were accepted instead. What mattered most then, as now, was not the money. It was the people—the people who overcame oppression, the people who took a risk in founding a new institution, and the people who renewed a community. So long as they remained united in their faith, they remained unshakeable to the core, and the details would be arranged in time.

This ardent community of believers has extended its circle to include more and more members as the years have gone by, though it has never lost its essential character. Today, the spirit and faith of its people are manifested through four choirs, a Sunday school, a Mission and Vacation Bible School, a Trustee Board, and Junior and Senior Usher Boards. That same faith and spirit shine on even as light from the new stained glass windows paints churchgoers in colored, living vibrancy. And this faith and spirit extend beyond the church doors, in the presence of members who give fully of themselves wherever they go.

Throughout the years, many ministers have been licensed or ordained from the church, and a number of pastors, deacons, and clerks have contributed to its legacy. The Reverend J.L. Kegler serves as the current pastor, alongside deacons Roy Burks, Richard Lee, Rodney Burks, Allen Steve White, and William Harrison, and clerks Yvonne Mitchner, Keisha Burks, Donella Knighton, and Monica Harris.

The story of Benevolence Missionary Baptist Church, which recounts a long history of a group of believers coming together through the good and difficult times to praise and wor-

ship the Lord, is truly an inspiring one of the dedication and perseverance of a faithful congregation of people who put all their love and trust in God.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Benevolence Missionary Baptist Church in Randolph County, Georgia for its congregation's enduring commitment, despite adversity, to each other and to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May their actions continue to inspire the community in courage, in dedication, and in faith.

RECOGNIZING MR. W. SCOTT REITZE

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 13, 2015*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. W. Scott Reitze for his lifelong public service to Middletown, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Reitze has been a member of the Middletown Township Fire Company since 1965. Throughout his tenure he has held positions of Chief Engineer, the Chairman of Company Apparatus Committee, and Fire Chief for the Company for 14 years. He was named Fireman of the Year in 1970 and 2002. Scott now sits on the Board of Directors. He is a retired engineer with the Kimberly Clark Corporation.

Over the last 50 years, Scott Reitze has put others before himself and he continues to do so. His years of dedicated service are a testament of what the Middletown Township community means to him. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to recognize Mr. W. Scott Reitze and thank him for his service to Pennsylvania.

REMEMBERING EARL HARRIS

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 13, 2015*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness and sincere admiration that I take this time to remember a dear friend and one of Indiana's finest legislators, State Representative Earl Harris of East Chicago. On Monday, March 23, 2015, Earl, a member of the Indiana House of Representatives for the past thirty-three years, passed away at the age of 73. Remembered by his colleagues and constituency as a consummate gentleman and champion for Northwest Indiana, Earl will be deeply missed by his devoted family, beloved friends, and the citizens he so faithfully served.

Earl Harris was born in Kerville, Tennessee, on November 8, 1941. Following his graduation from Woodstock High School in 1959, he relocated to Northwest Indiana to further his education. Earl attended both Indiana University Northwest and Purdue University Calumet, located in Northwest Indiana, as well as the Illinois Institute of Technology. Although he was well-known for his career in public office, Mr. Harris's lifetime of service to his fellow citizens predates his election to the Indi-

ana General Assembly. To those who knew him, it is no surprise that, as a young man, Earl spent six years as an enlisted member of the Navy Reserve. Throughout his life, Mr. Harris was also a small business owner, an employee of Inland Steel, and a fixed assets administrator for the School City of East Chicago.

Since his election to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1982, Representative Earl Harris proved himself to be, first and foremost, a devoted public servant. His colleagues in Indianapolis will forever remember him as a true visionary, a tireless advocate for the people of Northwest Indiana, and the finest of role models for any young legislator to emulate. Among his legislative accomplishments was the creation of a Lake Michigan marina development commission intended to promote economic development along the lake. This idea later got folded into the Marquette Plan that the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority is now implementing in Lake and Porter Counties.

His constituents will remember his kindness and his willingness to help in any way he could. I will miss working with Earl, as I have for many years, but will never forget his warmth and his compassion, as well as his relentless desire to leave Northwest Indiana, and the entire state, better than he found it.

While he was tirelessly committed to the people of Indiana, Earl Harris leaves to cherish his memory the most important people in his life, his devoted wife, Donna, and loving son, Earl Jr., as well as his extended family and the many people who were fortunate to call him a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of Indiana's finest, State Representative Earl Harris, for his outstanding leadership, devotion to his community, and commitment to improving the quality of life for residents of Northwest Indiana and throughout the state. His dedication to his family, friends, and those he so faithfully served is worthy of our admiration. I am proud to have called him my friend.

PASON SYSTEMS

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 13, 2015*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and applaud Pason Systems for their community leadership and economic contribution to Jefferson County.

Pason is a leading global provider of specialized data management systems for drilling rigs. The company's solutions, which include data acquisition, well site reporting, remote communications and web-based information management, enable collaboration between the rig and the office.

Pason expanded from 37,000 to 52,737 sq. ft. in Golden's Coors Technology Center. The company hired an additional 11 employees after the facility was complete, bringing employment to 254 people.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Pason Systems for their well-deserved Business Recognition Award.